



ANNUAL REPORT 2016–17

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Jan Ashford Communication Rights Australia	Secretary
Julie Phillips Disability Discrimination Legal Service	Systemic Advocacy
Deidre Griffiths Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service Inc.	Board Member

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Kerry O'Hagan	Administration
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Chairperson Report

Thanks to our members for their commitment and support to the values and work of Disability Advocacy Victoria (DAV). The demands on advocacy agencies during these transformative times prove challenging.

Disability Advocacy Victoria continues its representation on the following networks and committees:

- Disability Advocacy Resource Unit (DARU) Governance Group, governance is shared with VCOSS.
- Victorian Disability Advocacy Network (VicDAN), collaboration between disability advocates and legal service providers
- Victoria Police, working to improve the understanding of disability in the police force
- Law Institute Victoria Disability Law Committee

National Disability Insurance Scheme NDIS

Many issues arising from plan development and delays.

Safeguard framework was released – concerns with independence and oversight of commissioner

The Productivity Commission has been conducting an inquiry in to the NDIS.

National Disability Advocacy Program NDAP

The National Disability Advocacy Framework Review and the National Disability Advocacy Program Review has resulted in:

- NDAP funded agencies being offered 2 year funding contract – taking them to June 2019
- NDIS Appeals – broadening agencies to align with the NDIS roll out from a single NDAP agency to 9 NDAP agencies and more recently broadened further to 12 NDAP agencies.

Education

DAV has also continued its systemic focus on education. Providing submission to the Department of Education and Training – Review of the Education and Training Reform Act Regulations

Most notably the Victoria's Reportable Conduct Scheme commenced on 1 July 2017. Under the scheme, in-scope organisations must notify the Commission for Children and Young People and comply with the child safe standards. DAV is seeking to engage the commissioner around the particular needs and well documented vulnerabilities of children with a disability.

DAV has continued to build its relationship with VCOSS, member agencies attending a number of consultations held by VCOSS. DAV worked with VCOSS in relation to the VCOSS Budget Submission highlighting the need for access to independent disability advocacy, the support needs in the education setting for children with a disability and

DAV's research collaboration with the Federation University has gone ahead with one of the research topics following a successful funding grant, *Experiences of people who use alternative forms of communication in court*, with Dr Marg Camilleri, who further investigates the question; the needs of people with complex communication needs in their interaction with the criminal and civil justice system. Brief update from Marg:

The research is progressing well, albeit a little slower than expected. I greatly appreciate the time that interview participants have generously given to inform this research. I continue to be humbled by what I hear. I am also very appreciative of the continued commitment by DAV to support this project, in particular Communication Rights Australia and Disability Discrimination Legal Service.

At this stage I have slightly less than half of the required number of interview participants. If any DAV members are interested to know more about the research, in particular, if they feel they may be able to contribute by recruiting potential interview participants, I would be very keen to hear from them.

DAV Website

DAV works to keep its website up to date and we are also keen to promote the important work of our member agencies. We encourage members to contact DAV so that we can highlight the scope of work being done in the disability advocacy sector.

